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Musket

LEXINGTON HIGH SCHOOL

Vol. XXXIX, Issue 3 Dec. 2006

Jana Quao

Sarah Hebert-Johnson, Chrissy Kugel, and Shiela Angelo perform brilliantly in the fall musical.

Evita Keeps Its Promise

By Toni Maeck

You've heard "Don't Cry for Me Argentina." You may have seen Madonna and Antonio Banderas in the movie. But nothing can live up to the LHS production of the musical Evita. Marvelously acted, danced, and sung, with fabulous supporting music from the pit, and great costumes and set, Evita was yet another triumph for the LHS theatre department.

Set in the 1960s, Evita tells the story of Eva Peron, wife of Argentinian President Juan Peron, who became known as Argentina's spiritual leader because of her work in charity and politics. Eva and Juan were beautifully played by LHS seniors Chrissy Kugel and Chris Voss. Alex Parrish, a sophomore, masterfully played the well-known narrator and comic role of Che. Mariah Sloane and Tim Parsons also shone in all their solo numbers, especially, "Another Suitcase, Another Hall," and "On This Night of a Thousand Stars." Of course the project was bigger than these three actors' roles. The singing and dancing chorus dominated the stage, especially in the tango sequence and the number "Rolling." Alex Parrish acknowledged the enormity of the project. He said, "Taking on Evita is a colossal project because it is based off of real people and real events. There are so many layers of what the characters say and do."

The show was also a visual smash. The dancing and costumes captured the feeling of both the time period and the Latin culture of Argentina. The costume crew, headed by

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School Restricts Singing Valentines

By Sasha Wilson

Is Valentine's Day a consumer holiday to make single people feel poorly about themselves? Or is it a light-hearted day at LHS where students can be embarrassed in front of their peers by quartets of students dressed in fun costumes?

This year it will be neither. In the past, students could purchase quartets for their friends or their sweethearts. The quartets, dressed in funny costumes for the boys, and skirts that are perhaps a hair too short for the girls, would travel all over the school and sing to whomever had a telegram purchased for them. All in all, the short performances were a lighthearted and amusing break from class that would include much laughter and good music.

However, after last year's Valentine's Day, the administration will be cracking down on the tradition. According to administrators, many teachers and students felt uncomfortable about the proceedings so steps had to be taken to curtail some of the "excesses" of the Singing Valentine groups. Some teachers were not only offended by the overtly sexual nature of some of the performances, but also had problems with continuous class interruptions. After several all-school meetings between teachers and building administrators, a new set of guidelines for the singers was drafted.

The new rules include such changes as "telegrams may be ordered for and delivered to STUDENTS ONLY; teachers and school personnel are off limits," according to a hand-

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School To Open Early

'07-'08 School Year To Begin in August

By Lily Barrett

Tired of finishing school in late June? Well, it looks like that is going to change. On June 20, 2006, the School Committee devised a new calendar for the 2007-2008 school year that places the first day of school before Labor Day. On August 28th, 2007, there will be a half day for grades K-5, 6, 9, and new students. On August 29th, the rest of the students start. On Friday August 31st and September 3rd, the following Monday, there will be no school due to Labor Day.

Based on this plan, we'll finish the school year earlier than usual, whereas in the past, snow days have extended the school year into late June. Students whose summer plans start in mid to late June will not have to reschedule their exams. Students in AP classes and those preparing for MCAS will have more time to prepare for the spring exams. The new start date will also enable textbook distribution by teachers and schedule changes by guidance counselors to be completed before September. "This means that after Labor Day, we can hit the ground running," said Principal Michael Jones.

> ***"This means that after Labor Day, we can hit the ground running,"***
>
> *Principal Michael Jones*

On the downside, the August start means summer vacation will be slightly shorter, and families used to vacationing in the last week of August will have to adjust their schedule accordingly.

According to a Facebook poll, student have mixed feelings about the changes. Some display cool acceptance. Clara Miller who once lived in Las Vegas, Nevada, where the schools always started in August, said, "LHS is weird. All other schools in the entire country are [starting in August]. I'd rather get out earlier in June. It's just a week or two anyway, no big deal." Her friend Amanda Daigle agrees, saying, "It makes sense to me."

On the other hand, Larsen Husby said, "This is terrible! My birthday is August thirtieth! It's always been during summer vacation."

Sarah Whitney mourned the loss of a safety week, "The last week of August is when I get home from vacation. The whole purpose of the last week is to go to end-of-the summer parties and do last minute summer reading, and I am the biggest procrastinator. I need that extra time!"

Parents' reactions were similarly varied. Janet Kern, mother of junior Eric Kern, said, "My feeling is that in the long run, it probably is better, but as a family that cuts short our vacation the last week of August. It's kind of disappointing, especially in the last summer before Eric's senior year."

David Luberoff, father of Anna and Rebecca Luberoff agreed with the School Committee's decision: "I think this is a good idea because by the

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Catherine Kim

Heir to the Burger Throne

By Danny Metzger-Traber

A drive down Middlesex Turnpike will no longer be complete without a visit to the sparkling new Burger King. At night, the lights turn the burger joint into a sparkling beacon of hope across the consumer wasteland that is Burlington.

A step inside Burlington's new Burger King makes one feel like royalty. The new cooking facilities sparkle with a cleanliness wholly uncharacteristic of fast food. Anyone who has visited the restaurant's predecessor will bask in the luxury here. Three panels separate the ordering counter from the eating area, and ceiling ornaments provide casual dining with a quality atmosphere.

The partially new staff seems to have a revitalized zeal for their craft. From the friendly service to the delicious food, the whole process is a dream. Don't be surprised if a server will appear at your table with free cookies. This is the new Burger King.

Burger enthusiasts will relish the fact that the fare has changed only minimally. A few key additions such as strawberry cheesecake provide the restaurant with a bit more class. Though the menu may have remained untouched, the quality has increased dramatically. It makes one completely forget the health risks associated with frequent trips to fast food establishments. After all, how could such delicious food be harmful?

Rumors about the rebuild run rampant among King's regulars. Theories run the gamut from drive through safety to health code violations.

The management, however, remains tight lipped about the true reasons for the rebuilding. When I queried the Manager, the diplomatic response I received was "to better serve our customers." The one certainty is that this new establishment has raised its stock a considerable amount. This revamped restaurant is truly the jewel of Burger King's Crown.

FLiCK PiCK: For Your Consideration

By Danny Metzger-Traber

Christopher Guest's new film, *For Your Consideration*, is a good effort that just missed the mark. Guest's attempt at a narrative-based film leaves viewers wishing for a return to his so-called "mockumentary" roots.

The set-up for the film is promising; a group of washed up veteran actors and green newbies are making a period piece about Purim. Their whole world is turned upside down by a few internet reports of Oscar nods.

The main problem is a thread-bare storyline. Normally Guest's films allow the actors to really experiment with their characters and play off each other, but *Consideration*'s structure inhibits the improvisation of the characters. Instead of the normal laughs, we're left with a muddled story and limited character play.

Compared to most other current comedies, *For Your Consideration* is an achievement. Catherine O'Hara turns in a wonderful performance as the desperate actress Marilyn Hack.

Ricky Gervais, originally from the BBC sitcom "The Office," delivers some of the film's best humor as a studio executive. He tries to help make the Purim film more marketable, mainly recommending that the film be made, well, "less Jewish."

The main disappointment comes from being familiar with Guest's other works.. It is certainly hard to repeatedly turn out high quality material. It is even more difficult to watch a movie and know that the actors are being underutilized, and hampered by a flimsy script. *Consideration* is a marked deviation from Guest's distinct style.

The movie is probably worth seeing, but if you want to get a true glimpse of the genius that is Christopher Guest, you should rent *Spinal Tap, Waiting for Guffman, Best in Show,* or *A Mighty Wind*.

Heap Dons Large Hair

By Rivka Barrett

Imagine standing in line outside the Avalon Ballroom for two and a half hours, trembling with anticipation with your ticket in your hand. In front of you is a mother, her son and her daughter. All three sport tattoos and piercings. When asked how long they have been waiting, they report having arrived at 1:00 PM, hours before anyone else. You turn around, and see a mob behind you, a long line stretching for blocks. That was my experience one chilly night in November, as I stood waiting in line for a live concert by Imogen Heap, UK electronica-pop extraordinaire.

At 7:00, the doors opened, and the fans rushed into the Avalon Ballroom. Inside, bright pink and blue lights lit up the center of the stage, where a Plexiglas grand piano stood, decorated with pink flowers. Several contraptions attached to the piano included a Yamaha keyboard, drum and base machine, and computer monitor. The pulse of energy in the Avalon Ballroom was almost tangible. People from all over chatted with strangers, united by their excitement and zeal for Heap's music.

After two opening acts, Heap came onstage, donning a fancy hot pink dress with a matching boa. Her hair was teased into a giant, ratty beehive, giving her an eccentric Victorian-era appearance. Heap launched into "Headlock," "Daylight Robbery," and "Hide and Seek," songs from her recent CD, "Speak For Yourself."

Moving easily from piano to electronic equipment as she sang, Heap's voice floated across the stage. She danced energetically in front of the audience, as projected images and colored lights flickered on the wall behind her, giving the performance the unique quality that is so essential to her music. Occasionally, her equipment was defective and she had to fiddle with it in between songs. Overall, Heap's performance was phenomenal and refreshing, creating an intimate connection with her fans.

Lisa Tsaur
Heap tickles the ivories at the Avalon.

Opening for Heap were Levi Weaver and Kid Beyond. Weaver performed folkish, somewhat depressing songs from his CD, "Civil War Between My Heart and Mind." His haunting voice filled the stage as he strummed on his guitar. At one point, he whipped out a cello arc and played his guitar like a violin. Boisterously cracking jokes with the audience, Kid Beyond used his voice to create various sound effects, alternately beat-boxing and singing songs from his CD, "Amplivate." Although his performance was met with much approval from the audience, there were

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Musket

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EDITORIALS

Abolish the Weighted GPA

A School Senator's Rebuttal to a November Editorial

By Kelsey Savage

"Weighted GPA is fascism! Give me liberty or give me death!" was one LHS student's heartfelt statement about the negative effects of a weighted grade point average system.

A grade point average, whether weighted or not, is a three-digit summary that claims to help measure intelligence and intellectual capacity. To some it represents the value of effort dedicated to school work.

The weighted GPA is assigned to students every three months, and is, in essence, a de-facto ranking system. Lexington High School, and for that matter our entire society, has played into this game of hierarchal ordering by deeming certain classes to be "more valuable" than others.

> ***"Roughy seven percent of US high schools... use weighted grade point averages."***
>
> *Paul Attewell*

It is a way of defining some students as more valuable or intelligent than others. It is time to reassess how we as students want to be measured and try to create a more holistic approach to our high school academic, emotional and social life.The weighted GPA might not be the root-cause surrounding high levels of stress and hyper-competitive attitudes at LHS, but it is part of the problem and cannot be ignored.

The weighted GPA is a symbol of exclusiveness and elitism that is constructed around the false notion that an AP or honors class is more challenging than a level one or two class.

It is an academic caste system of "haves" and "have-nots" that permeates our school. The proposed policy that eliminates the weighted GPA is a step in the right direction but, admittedly, it is not the final fix. In fact, it is just the tip of the iceberg.

Already, the policy has spurred heated debates and forced us to question our current views of an educational ranking system. Granted, hordes of students will not suddenly stop enrolling in AP and honors classes after the weighted GPA is discarded.

However, thanks to the new policy, people have begun to examine their motivation and reasoning for entering high level classes.

Hopefully, the proposed measure will send a message to students, parents, administrators, and college admissions officers that we will not be defined by a number.

Some people argue that a weighted GPA is a critical measurement tool college's use to determine who is accepted. Yet, Paul Attewell, a professor of sociology at the City University of New York's Graduate School published a study that found that only "roughly seven percent of U.S high schools... use weighted grade point averages".

Attewell reminds us that "for every kid [in affluent schools] who benefits from a weighted GPA, there is kid enrolled in non-honors courses who finds that her [his] B grade counts as a 2.5, not 3.0... admissions formulae that reward class rank severely disadvantages the latter child." Surely, we should not keep a system that advantages some, but hinders just as many people.

I agree with Garth Goldwater's editorial's closing comment that a system with no grades and a detailed, evaluative, written report of every student would be best.

I believe that eliminating the weighted GPA is a critical step toward creating that ideal structure that would best suit students of all ability levels.

Predictions for Purple Congress

By Gita Ramamurti

The Democrats emerged victorious from the November midterm elections, gaining control of both the House and the Senate. Democrat Nancy Pelosi, regarded as erratic and ultra-liberal by many Republicans, has been nominated Speaker of the House and will take power when Congress convenes in January. Here's a look at some of the issues surrounding the new Congress:

1) *Will President Bush and the Democrats get along?*

"Dangerous." "In denial." "Oblivious."

These are only some of the insults Pelosi has thrown at Bush in the past. Returning the favor, Bush has mocked Pelosi in campaign pitches and charged that a Democratic victory in the midterm elections would mean the "terrorists win."

Yet, with the Democrats gaining control of Congress, Bush must cooperate with Pelosi and Senate majority leader Harry Reid if he wants to get things done. Since the speaker sets the agenda in the House, Bush knows he'll have to keep Pelosi happy if he wants to have his initiatives debated in the House. And Pelosi knows she'll need Bush's signature on key bills.

As a result, Bush and Pelosi met for a peacemaking lunch soon after the elections. Smiling in front of cameras in the Oval Office, they promised to cooperate.

But will they really cooperate? Bush has made a habit out of mocking Pelosi and she, in turn, has been a scathing critic of the Bush administration. Old habits die hard and after the many insults the two have flung back and forth, I wonder if they'll really be willing to forget the past.

Each side has started off with friendly gestures to the other. Bush pleased many Democrats when he announced the resignation of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld. And Pelosi and company declared at the outset that impeaching the president was "off the table." But it's anybody's guess how long this honeymoon will last.

2) *Will the Democrats make college more affordable?*

Like most high school seniors, my life right now revolves around college. And for those of you who aren't seniors, college will soon become one of your primary concerns. Of all the items on the Democrats' agenda for next January, their education plan is the one that will most directly affect us. In a report entitled "Six for '06," Pelosi laid out the top six priorities of the Democrats. Among these were a set of initiatives designed to lower the cost of college education by cutting interest rates on student loans and making college tuition tax-deductible.

The Democrats' plan would certainly be a good thing for those of us heading off to college and graduate school in coming years. The Democrats want to cut interest rates on student loans in half, making them less of a burden. These cuts, however, would cost the government around $60 billion in 5 years. And making tuition tax-deductible would cost almost another $5 billion per year.

Such high costs could mean the end of these education initiatives since another goal of the Democrats is reinstituting "fiscal discipline." If balancing the budget becomes a higher priority than lowering the cost of education, you can forget about cheaper college loans.

In short, don't hold your breath—and keep saving your money.

So, what will actually happen next January? Politicians don't always live up to their word, and though the Democrats have clearly outlined their priorities in "Six for '06," it's unlikely they will actually end up pursuing all of them. The Democrats have many ambitious goals including passing a stem-cell research bill, lessening the influence of lobbyists, and promoting energy independence. And don't forget that many congressional debates will revolve around Iraq, which will remain a highly contentious issue not only between the Republicans and Democrats, but within the Democratic Party itself.

Ultimately, the success of the agenda may depend as much on the relationship between Bush, Pelosi, and Reid as it will on anything else. When the time comes, will these three set aside their personal differences to try and get things done, or will they instead revert to what seems to come naturally— partisan squabbling?

We'll soon find out.

Teachers May Cancel Class

To the Musket:

After reading the Musket story "What Happened To Cancelled Classes" (November 2006), I realized that there is some lingering confusion over the policy followed by the school administration with regard to cancelled classes.

To clarify: Teachers are free to cancel classes when they are absent, subject to the conditions set forth in the two Senate bills from 1991 and 1994. That is, if a teacher has a class comprised of juniors and seniors and the teacher believes students may use their time more productively elsewhere, the teacher may leave an assignment for the class and cancel it.

So that there will be some measure of accountability, I have asked department heads to let me know which classes were cancelled, what the assignments were, and why the teacher believed students' time could be spent more productively elsewhere. However, teachers do not need to ask permission to cancel a class or to provide me with assignments in advance. Teachers do occasionally cancel classes under these provisions, and at times junior and senior classes are cancelled because a substitute is not available. Students are always expected to report to class unless they are specifically told the class is cancelled.

The goal of the Senate bill, I believe, is one commonly shared on campus: that when a teacher is absent, the school makes the best use of learning time possible.

Dr. Michael P. Jones

got ideas?

Send in your letters, photography, comments, cartoons and what ever else you can scrounge up . . .

Leave it in the Musket Mailbox in the library or e-mail it to *themusket@gmail.com*

NEWS/FEATURES

Senate (not so) Briefs

By Eric Eid-Reiner

On December 13, the LHS Student-Faculty Senate passed a bill that would limit each homeroom announcement to 30 words or less. The bill will allow clubs to post longer announcements on the school's web site, but they will no longer be able to submit lengthy announcements to be read during homeroom. Its intent is to ensure that those announcements read regularly in homerooms would be brief and to the point. The bill also allows limitations to be placed upon the number of times a given announcement will be read.

On November 29, Principal Michael Jones vetoed a bill passed earlier in the month that would have posted students' community service hours on their profiles. The intention of the bill was to allow faculty to more easily reach out to students who need service hours. Such information would have been available to teachers via the AP Web and Anaces web site.

In his veto message, Jones pointed out that a number of issues relating to reforming the high school's community service program were already being discussed in depth by the faculty and that he wanted the Senate to hold off on any action at this time. Jones did indicate that "this solution may be a good one," but that he wished to "have people who are charged with implementing decisions have a voice in what that decision will be." After some discussion the Senate agreed not to propose an override vote on Jones' veto at this time.

In October, Senate did manage to pass a bill that enlists the administration in aiding a Senate group in organizing a community service fair. Similar to the current activities fair, the community service fair would provide students with an opportunity to explore and be exposed to a wide range of service resources to better help them fulfill their hours. At this time, several Senate committees are working on organizing

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User Fees Are Here to Stay

By Ruiyong Chen

Ever since the first day students set foot in a Lexington school, user fees have been a part of their academic lives. Whether you are aware of these fees or not, we've all had to pay them — for school sports, bus transportation, parking and even student transcripts.

The prevalent trend of public school user fees across Massachusetts, however, has many students, parents, and faculty members worried.

Governor-elect, Deval Patrick, as part of his proposed state-wide education reform, has announced that he plans to set aside thirty-four million dollars of the next state budget in an effort to eliminate user fees.

Patrick has made it clear that he wished to provide public school students with access to fundamental services that they have been previously deprived of.

The initiative would give an incentive, in the form of thirty-five dollars per student, to each school district that eliminates user fees.

Thirty-five dollars per student may sound like a great deal, but after some number crunching, Lexington would only receive slightly over $200,000 from the state. To put it in perspective, the athletic fees at the high school alone add up to over $400,000 per year. This is double the amount the entire district would receive.

As Lexington would financially benefit from keeping the current user fees in place, it seems highly unlikely that Lexington will take governor-elect Patrick up on his proposal. You can expect that user fees will continue to thrive in our community at LHS.

Evita Keeps Her Promise

Continued from page 1

Hannah Mackenzie-Margulies, surpassed themselves on this show. Tech manager Carolyn Silva-Sanchez and the enormous stage crew did a wonderful job of recreating the feeling of 1960s Argentina.

A perfect marriage of set design, character development, and musical presentation was the revolving bed in the number "Goodnight and Thank You." Steve Bogart, Anne Carey, Jeff O'Connell, and Mr. Orchestra all led their capable artists to great heights to make Evita a wonderful experience for the audience.

Alex Parrish said it the best: "On and off stage we put in a lot of work to find those different levels of understanding of the characters and the music. I think we really pulled it off and made it a piece of art."

School Year to Start in August

Continued from page 1

end of August, most kids are more than ready to go back to school and by the end of June, most kids are ready for school to be over."

Teachers expressed ambivalence about a shortened summer. Social Studies teacher Deborah Johnston said, "It cuts short for this summer the time with my family. I spend July teaching teachers all over the country in summer institutes, and August is family vacation time." However, "to put things in perspective, schools in Texas start the first of August!"

English teacher Dane Despres applauded the earlier start. "This should lead to greater organization and a less rushed feeling at the beginning of the year, which can only be a good thing. Other benefits include one more week for seniors to spend with teachers writing college essays, and more time in the second quarter before the winter holiday break."

FEATURES

Singing Valentines Toned Down

Continued from page 1

out made available to the people involved in Singing Valentines. In addition, there will be no personalized costumes, as all student singers must wear formal concert attire. Singers may only deliver telegrams to classes taught by teachers who have agreed to participate beforehand, and singers must allow the recipient of the telegram to remain in his/her regular seat during the performance. Finally, the singers must not touch the recipient at any time during their performance.

Some students involved in Singing Valentines are in an uproar. Senior Chrissy Kugel said, "These new rules are unfair. None of the students were consulted on the charges that prompted the changes in the rules."

"There were no chances to discuss and reach a compromise," she added. "Costumes have always been approved by the deans, teachers have always had the power to say they don't want telegrams in their class."

Singing Valentines faculty sponsor and music teacher Brian O'Connell was non-committal about the changes. He said, "Singing Valentines will be very different this year. Whereas in the past telegrams were a bit flamboyant, this year they will be more toned down and thereby causing less controversy."

Some other singers expressed the hope that these new rules will be a jumping off point for more collaborative work between students and the administration in the future.

Giulia Davis

Singing Valentines faculty advisor Brian O'Connell was compliant with Valentine telegram changes that resulted from various faculty and administrative concerns.

Imogen Heap Energizes the Avalon

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complaints from people who felt that it was too long.

Several Lexington High School students attended the concert that night. Ceanna Fried commented that the performances involved "a lot of interaction with the audience." Larsen Husby enjoyed the performance, but reported that sometimes the music drowned out Imogen's vocals.

A Lexington High School alumna, Lisa Tsaur (01) is currently filming a documentary on Heap, following her from city to city on tour. Tsaur has always had an interest in movies, and first explored the technical aspects of film in a TV Production class she took during her freshman year at LHS. She attended California State University in Fullerton (CSUF) and studied Radio/TV/Film.

Last May, Tsaur and her friend Samantha Hale, both Imogen Heap fans, attended eight concerts on Heap's North American tour. A month later, they decided to begin filming. Since then, they have been all over the United States, from Boston to Phoenix. By the end of the tour, Tsaur reports, they "will have attended 29 shows in 28 cities across the United States and Canada in 43 days."

Tsaur and Hale have personally interviewed Heap for the documentary. "Imogen is a perfectionist," Tsaur remarks, "She can easily spend months trying to work out a single track." She says that Heap has an extraordinary ability to give her fans "concerts that could never be duplicated on an album. Every night is a different experience."

Lisa Tsaur

Former LHS Student Lisa Tsaur (right) poses with Imogen Heap (left). Tsaur is currently filming a documentary on the popular performer.

LHS Student-Faculty Senate Updates

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such a fair to be held sometime in the spring.

The Senate is currently debating a bill that would allow underclassmen to go to the library during study hall without having to first present a pass to their study hall teachers. However, as presently written, the bill would still require students to have a library pass signed by classroom teachers. This pass would then have to be submitted to the respective study hall teachers before the end of the block. Students who fail to follow this procedure would run the risk of incurring an unexcused absence.

An attempt this fall to amend the Senate Constitution to change the wording regarding the five open seats in the Senate set aside for underrepresented groups was defeated. The current language states that these seats shall be open "for groups who feel that they are not represented in the [regular] election plan." With the defeat of this proposed amendment, the existing language will remain in place.

SPORTS

Girls Lose Close Opener

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to be reckoned with as she scored 20 points and pulled down 12 rebounds. Strong performances were also turned in by Jessie Igoe, Nena Uguomo and Michelle Martin. Coach McManus was more than pleased with the girls' effort. He was fully aware that opening against the powerful Melrose squad would give the coaching staff a strong indication of what the team will be capable of throughout the winter season.

He was particularly impressed that the team never folded despite a couple of serious runs made by the host team at various times in the contest, especially a 15-6 point run Melrose racked up just before halftime. For now, all the preseason sprints and shootarounds seem to have paid off.

Catherine Kim

Stacy Lineham goes strong to the hoop.

Wrestling Team Begins Strong

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the day against a Needham freshman, Miles Adley started things off with a solid win in the 112 pound weight class. From there on it was all Lexington as the final score of 57-9 indicated.

Senior Tom Dixon had an exciting win as his quick reversal in the first period turned into a pin and another 6 points for the Minutemen. Other pins in the Needham match up were scored by Najeeb Hossain, Bittarelli, DeCarlo, Rawnsley, Asta, Schlosser, Lapukhin, Popeil, Cho and Hernandez.

The final match against Brookline was a very close one with Lexington winning by a final score of 34 – 31. Starting off in the 119 pound weight class, Juniors Hossain and Bittarelli had tough matches.

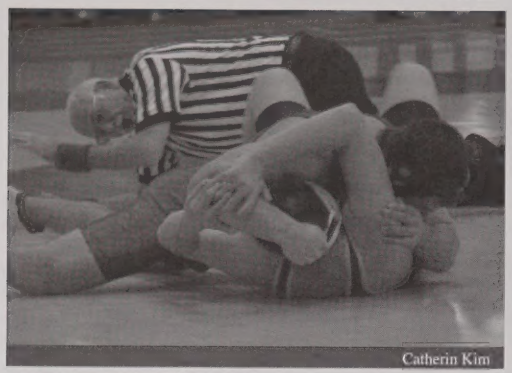
Although losing both those matches, Lexington started their comeback when Sophomore DeCarlo and Captain Rawnsley both won exciting matches. Both Gleb and Popiel then won their matches leading to themost interesting one the day for Cho at 215 lbs. Cho's match went into into double overtime. With seconds left Harry managed an escape from his Brookline opponent, to claim victory.

To clinch Lexington's win over Brookline, juniors Jorge Hernandez and Grant Forestall then both pulled off quick pins putting 12 points on the board. The final match of the meet was Miles Adley's, who was making his varsity debut. Adley fought hard in losing a close 8-7 contest.

The varsity wrestling team has kicked off its season by defeating three Division One teams. Along the way, the JV wrestlers have also showed much potential each time with many wins and pins.

It has been a strong opening for a team which still does not have its full lineup in place. The Minutemen will participate in the upcoming Wakefield Tournament and then turn its attention to the very tough Middlesex League where perennial powers like Reading, Burlington and Wichester await.

SPORTS



Junior Daniel Popiel finishes his victory in the 189 pound class.

Wrestlers Start Strong

By Najeeb Hossain

The wrestling team jumped out to a quick start this season, winning three matches on the opening weekend against Malden, Brookline and Needham, and then following that up with a decisive win over Malden Catholic. Led by veterans like Co-captains Cameron Rawley and Ian Traniello along with returning lettermen Marq Bitterelli, Joey DeCarlo and Jorge Hernandez, the grapplers showed that they are more than ready to improve upon last year's .500 record.

Blessed with over fifty wrestlers, Coach Steve Lagow now has the flexibility, especially in the upper weight classes, that the team has lacked the past few years. With newcomer Danny Popiel at 189 lbs., Harry Cho at 215 and Hernandez at heavyweight, the Minuteman can put some serious heavy wrestlers on the mat to go with a talented group of lower and middle weight performers.

The Minuteman certainly excelled in the quad meet against Malden, Brookline and Needham held at Lexington. Due to last minute injuries and illnesses, the varsity roster was missing a few members. Despite this, the Minutemen still emerged victorious in all three matches. The first match of the day was against Malden who Lexington defeated 55 – 20. In the early matches, the Minutemen and Malden exchanged pins but then 5 consecutive wins by Lexington's Brendan Asta, Ben Schlosser, Gleb Lapukhin, and Popiel sealed the win for Lexington. During the second match of

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Boys Basketball Begins With Bang

By Tsung-Tang Shen

The boys basketball team opened its 2006-07 season with a complete route of an overmatched Melrose team. Led by Tom Henneberry (18 points), Mike Andryauskas (16 points), and sophomore Danny O'Keefe (14 points), the Minuteman romped over their opponents with a score of 88-34. The lopsided margin allowed longtime coach Bob Farias to use his bench liberally throughout the contest.

Andryauskas and O'Keefe were particularly outstanding on the boards where they outrebounded a much taller and heavier Melrose front line. Henneberry provided artillery from the outside, sinking four three pointers on four attempts.

The victory showed that the boys were ready to defend their league crown despite the loss of last year's most valuable player and All-Scholastic forward Jimmy O'Keefe (Danny's older brother) to graduation.

They boys had two preseason scrimmages against Waltham and Bedford, winning both by large margins.

An 87-27 victory over Waltham left Lexington wondering if the two schools should even be in the same division. "This year's team has a good mix of veterans and young kids," said senior forward Henneberry. "With seven seniors, we have the potential to do big things."

The boys now face 18 Middlesex League games, as well as the Chelsea Holiday Tournament, which regularly features some of the top high school teams in New England.

Last year's team captured the league title with the help of the older O'Keefe, and then made a spectacular postseason run.

Thoughts of the loss to the Charlestown Townies in the Division I North semi-finals last spring still linger in the back of the returning players' minds as they enter this season.

The Minutemen have taken the Middlesex League title 5 out of the last 6 years, accumulating an astounding league record of 101-7 during that run.

This year's returning starters include tri-captains Sean Sullivan, Ross Curley (who has been injured), and Henneberry, along with forward Matt Cunha. They will provide leadership as the team looks to go deep into the tournament once again this year.

Forward Mike Andryauskas has already proven himself to be an inside force for the 2006-2007 LHS boys basketball team.

Girls Take the Court

By Valerie Gilbert

The girls varsity basketball team opened its season with a tough 50-45 loss to the always powerful Melrose hoopsters. To add to the difficulty, the girls had to begin their season in hostile territory by travelling to Melrose for the game. Still, it was a moral victory for the squad who now know they can compete with anyone in the Middlesex League.

The girls' varsity coach, Paul McManus, had been putting the girls through intense practices six days a week. The strong pre-season effort appeared to pay off in the Melrose game as the girls hung tough throughout the contest and proved that they were able run with their opponents.

In the opening contest center Allie Needham showed that she was going to be a force

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Offbeat Athlete of the Month:

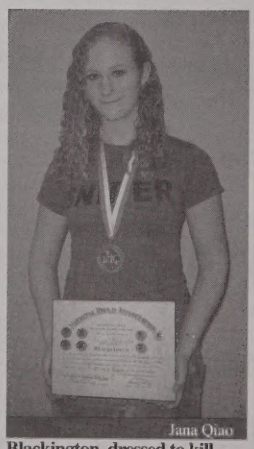
Young Markswoman Lauren Blackington Sets her Sights on Success

By Arjun Gokhale

She may not be David Dadgar, but it is impossible to deny that Lauren Blackington has a big pair of guns. In fact, she has had them since she was twelve years old. Every summer, you can see Lauren with both of her Anschutz Model 1903's at the Pleasant Valley Camp in New Hampshire, where she was first introduced to riflery.

Although both her father and grandfather had been avid riflists, Lauren was not sold on the sport until she experienced it for herself. All it took was one shot. With that, she knew riflery was something she wanted to pursue. The independence of the sport, and "the challenge of competing with yourself to advance to the next level," is what kept her hooked.

Riflery, like many other sports, is a team sport that relies heavily on individual contributions. But unlike most other team sports, such as football where the play of the offensive line affects the running back and quarterback, the performance of the individual is independent of how well the rest of the team does. Most competitions are played six on six with the top five scores from each team counting towards their score.



Blackington, dressed to kill, displays her various awards.

Each shooter is given ten bullets to fire at ten targets. Each target is placed fifty feet away; a bullseye is worth ten points, while hitting the target anywhere else is worth two. Having perfected the art of shooting, Lauren routinely contributes between ninety and a hundred points to her team.

However, Lauren is not satisfied with conquering the sport, and now devotes her summers to helping others attain proficiency and occasionally mastery like hers.

Like many teachers, Lauren finds the joy of helping others more pleasing than personal success. Indeed, she considers her greatest achievement to be the marked progress in one of her students and not her numerous personal awards, including medaling as a sharpshooter.

Two years ago, when she first began to teach at her camp, Lauren noticed a shy boy who seemed scared of shooting a gun that was as big as he was. She took him under her wing, and gave him tips that one could only learn from experience, like setting up aiming at the bulls-eye, but only focusing on the gun afterwards. Under her guidance, he became one of the better shooters at the camp and eventually medaled as a sharpshooter.

Although Lauren credits her coach, Jamie Hodder, and her parents for instilling within her a passion for riflery, she does not plan to continue competitive shooting.

According to Lauren, "Riflery is really fun but at the collegiate level you have to devote a lot of time simply to riflery to remain competitive and I do not want anything to take away from my focus on academics at college."

However, she does intend on going to the occasional shooting range and coming back to camp every summer.